



CITY OF TUCSON

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Regina Romero, Tucson City Council Ward 1
(520) 791-4040

Date: May 5, 2010
TTY: (520) 791-2639

Tucson First City to Sue State of Arizona over SB1070 – “Don’t Boycott Tucson”

Saying SB 1070 is bad for Tucson’s economy and is unconstitutional, Tucson’s Mayor and City Council voted 5-1 yesterday to become the first City in Arizona to sue the State of Arizona.

Tucson City Councilor Regina Romero, serving her first term as the first Latina ever elected to Tucson City Council, says Tucson is different than the rest of Arizona. “Our vote yesterday sends the message that you don’t need to boycott Tucson,” she said. “We don’t support the Governor and the Republican State Legislature’s actions. We want to welcome you to a safe, wonderful place where we respect a diversity of people and cultures.”

The City’s actions come after the first lawsuit by Tucson Police Officer Martin Escobar, whose legal challenge is based on the fact that the population and proximity to the border make it difficult to have race-neutral “suspicion” of being in the country. The City of Tucson is located 60 miles north of the international border with Mexico and shares the border with Sonora, Mexico. The sister cities of Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora are strong partners in Tucson’s economy, with more than 30 percent of Tucson’s tax revenues attributed to Mexican tourism. Hispanics are approximately 36 percent of Tucson’s diverse population. Arizona is also home to 22 federally recognized native American tribes, communities and nations, with two tribes, the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui in greater Tucson.

“This misguided bill opens the door to racial profiling so that all Latinos and people of color in Arizona automatically become suspect,” said Romero. “It’s wrong, it’s unconstitutional and we can’t afford not to challenge it in court.”

In addition to the racial profiling concerns, the bill makes a person who is unable to “show their papers” guilty of trespassing if present on public or private land in Arizona. The bill also criminalizes the “unlawful transporting/harboring” of people who may be riding in a car or living in a home with other U.S. citizens and non-citizens.

Romero is concerned that people of color will lose trust in police and government officials to protect them from crime. She thinks people will avoid seeking emergency medical care and may stop reporting serious crimes. “We cannot allow children and families to live in fear,” she said.

The daughter of Mexican immigrant farm worker parents, Romero was born in Yuma, Arizona, the youngest of six siblings and the first in her family to graduate from college. Her parents and siblings are U.S. citizens, including her brother Jose Romero, Jr., who is a Gulf War Veteran. She was elected to the City Council in 2007.

###